

MARY MCGEE AND SUSAN PIERCE.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 492.]

JUNE 10, 1842.

Mr. MOORE, from the Committee on Private Land Claims, submitted the following

REPORT :

*The Committee on Private Land Claims, to which was referred the petition of Mary McGee and Susan Pierce, heirs of George Neilson, report :*

That the petitioners state that, in September, 1839, they filed in the bounty land office proof of the service of their deceased brother, George Neilson, during the late war, and of his honorable discharge, and were there informed that the law granting the bounty had expired by limitation, and that the law must be revived to satisfy the claim ; that bills were reported at the ensuing session favorable to this and other like claims, but not passed ; that they are both poor, and earnestly solicit the early attention of Congress to the subject.

In a letter from the Commissioner of Pensions it is stated that it appears that George Neilson enlisted in the service of the United States on the 12th of August, 1812, for five years, and was honorably discharged on the 12th of August, 1817, and acquired a right to bounty land, which it appears has never been granted to him or his heirs.

The act of the 24th of December, 1811, and the 11th of January, 1812, declares that every non-commissioned officer and private who shall have enlisted for five years, and who shall be discharged from the service with a certificate from the commanding officer of the company, battalion, or regiment, that he had faithfully performed his duty, "shall be allowed and paid, in addition to said bounty, three months' pay, and one hundred and sixty acres of land." The act of the 16th and 29th of April, 1816, made an appropriation of two millions of acres of land to carry into effect the several acts granting bounty lands to soldiers of the regular army by the act of May, 1812.

The petitioners make oath, before a competent court in Baltimore, that they are sisters of George Neilson ; that they had three brothers, Feltz, James, and said George ; that Feltz Neilson left home upwards of thirty years ago, and has never been heard of since, and is believed to be dead ; that James Neilson died at Sackett's Harbor during the late war ; that George Neilson has never been heard of since the 12th of August, 1817, when he was discharged from the service of the United States, and is

believed to be dead; and that they believe that they are the sole heirs at law of the said George Neilson.

This testimony is corroborated by Mrs. Ann Kelly, who deposed before the same court that she is sixty years old; was well acquainted with the parents of petitioners, and all their children, and has always lived in the same neighborhood with petitioners and their parents, and was very intimate with them.

Chief Justice Brice, before whom the testimony was taken, certifies that he is satisfied, from the aforesaid testimony, that the petitioners are the sole heirs at law of the said George Neilson.

It appears that the act to extend the time of issuing military land warrants, approved January 27, 1835, expired on the 6th of May, 1839, and that there exists now no law authorizing such warrants to issue.

Your committee are of opinion that George Neilson had clearly a right to the bounty of one hundred and sixty acres of land, and that his legal heirs are equitably entitled to the same, and that the testimony creates strong presumption that the petitioners are his sole heirs; and the committee therefore report a bill for their relief.